

Micah: Great Expectations
Micah 6

When God “Fails” Our Expectations (vv. 1-5)

- Micah rebuked the people for ingratitude. (vv. 3-5)
 - They were acting as if God had no history among them.
 - Yet God had delivered them from the clutches of Pharaoh.
 - Yet God had given them leaders in the wilderness.
 - Yet God had protected them on their journey.
 - Yet God had forgiven them and restored them in the Promised Land.
 - Yet God had become wearisome to Israel.
- Application
 - Do you ever feel wearied by God?
 - One of the chief dangers to our souls is the sin of ingratitude.

For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. (Rom 1:21)

What God Expects from Us (vv. 6-8)

- Micah’s audience turned to great sacrifice and service as a means of satisfying God.
- Micah’s answer was something less (and more). (v. 8)
 - Micah 6:8 is not a condemnation of institutional religion; it’s a condemnation of heartless religion.
 - The heart is the key to everything.

Such a walk yields the affections and devotion called for in the second phrase: “to love loyal lovingkindness.” This affection grounded on a discerning and reflective walk with God in turn leads to concrete actions of equity: “to do justice.” (Mark Gignilliat)

- Love for God (“walk humbly with your God”) leads to...
 - Love for others (“love kindness”), which leads to...
 - Right action (“do justice”).
- Application:
 - Do you see how the gospel is always prior, even when we’re talking about the law?

- Fires need fuel.
- If we see indifference toward others, the first place to look is our relationship with God.
- And considering God's kindness, where can you make a difference?

God does not need your good works, but your neighbor does. (Martin Luther)

The first question which the priest and the Levite asked was: 'If I stop to help this man, what will happen to me?' But the good Samaritan reversed the question: 'If I do not stop to help this man, what will happen to him?'. (Martin Luther King, Jr.)

What We Can Expect When We Ignore God's Expectations (vv. 9-16)

- God is patient, but God is not indulgent.

Think not, sinners, that you shall escape thus; God's mill goes slow, but grinds small; the more admirable His patience and bounty now is, the more dreadful and unsupportable will that fury be which ariseth out of His abused goodness. Nothing smoother than the sea, yet when stirred into a tempest, nothing rageth more. Nothing so sweet as the patience and goodness of God, and nothing so terrible as His wrath when it takes fire. (William Gurnall)

- Even our good things cannot satisfy if God is ignored, but therein lies the road to Christ:

Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, ²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Matthew 6:19-21)

Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" ³⁷ And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸ This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰ On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets." (Matthew 22:36-40)